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THE PLAY-PARTY IN NORTHEAST MISSOURI.

BY GOLDY M. HAMILTON.

IN this Journal (vol. xxiv, pp. 295-318) appeared an article by Mrs. L. D. Ames, on "The Missouri Play-Party" as seen by her about thirty years ago. The last four or five pages were devoted to play-party songs recently collected.

Upon inquiring among my students, many of whom are from the country districts of northeast Missouri, about the play-party, I find that it is still a not uncommon form of amusement for young people there, even within a few miles of a normal school, and not uncommon farther south, even near the university. A former student of this school, Miss Mary Morrison, now teaching in a rural district near Columbia, writes me that one of her pupils, a girl of twelve, "has been to nine play-parties this year." The following songs, unless otherwise specified, are from a collection written down for a student in the normal school, Mr. Luther Crookshank, by Mrs. Anne Wood, whose ancestors were loggers in Mississippi and Louisiana, but who has spent all her life, so far, in Missouri, mostly in Linn County, and has learned and sung these songs there. The same student reports that in Sullivan County play-parties are still the favorite form of amusement of some of the people.

In a certain class of sixteen studying rhetoric here now, there is one student who knows all the songs but two in Mrs. Ames's collection, and has heard them at play-parties.

Seven know "Bounce around;" eight, "We'll all go down to Rowser;" ten, "My Father and Mother were Irish;" two, "Angelina;" three, "Oh, ain't I gone?" seven, "I went to see my Susan;" ten, "Shoot the Buffalo;" six, "Weevily Wheat;" eight, "Sandy he belonged to the Mill;" none, "I've been to the East;" fifteen, "Skip to my Lou;" one, "The Juniper-Tree;" ten, "The Jolly Old Miller;" nine, "We're marching round the Levee;" ten, "Captain Jinks;" fifteen, "Old Dan Tucker;" one, "Yonder she comes;" eleven, "Indian Boys;" nine, "Pass one Window;" seven, "Old Gray Hoss;" seven, "I'll come back and be your Beau;" five, "Old Mother Keturah" (except the first stanza); eleven, "King William;" four, "Possum Pie;" eight, "Fare you well;" five, "Twenty-five Miles to London;" two, "I'm going to Marry;" six, "Hogs in the Cornfield;" two, "Shiloh;" two, "Jack went a-fishing;" three, "Old Raccoon."

"Skip to my Lou" seems to be the best known of all these play-party songs; it is sung also by school-children on the play-grounds at recess.

This shows that the play-party in northeast Missouri is anything but dead. The first few songs mentioned above are variations of those published by Mrs. Ames, and are arranged in the order in which they appear in her article. The tunes are the same as those published by her.

I. ROWSER'S.

1. |: Oh, let's go down to Rowser's :| (*three times*)
And get some lager-beer.

Oh, nice lager-beer!
Oh, sweet lager-beer!
Oh, let's go down to Rowser's
And get some lager-beer.
2. |: Oh, never mind the old folks :| (*three times*)
When they're away from home, etc.

2. JIM ALONG A JOSIE.

Fire in the mountain,
Run, boys, run!
Fire in the mountain,
Run, boys, run!
Cat's in the cream-jar,
Run, girls, run!
Cat's in the cream-jar,
Run, girls, run!

Chorus.

Hey, Jim along, hey, Jim along!
Hey, Jim along a Josie!

3. WEEVILY WHEAT.

This is like Mrs. Ames's version.

1. Across the field of barley,

Chorus.

I won't have none of your weevily wheat,
I won't have none of your barley;
It takes some flour for about one hour
To bake a cake for Charley.

2. O Charley he's a nice young man,
Charley he's a dandy;
For every time he goes to town
He treats the girls on candy.¹

¹ Or,

He always likes to kiss the girls
Whene'er he finds it handy.

3. Oh, who's been here since I've been gone
Across the fields of barley?
A pretty little girl with a red dress on,
Over the fields of barley.
4. The higher up the cherry-tree,
The riper grew the cherries;
The sooner the boy courts the girl,
The sooner they will marry.
5. If I'd been here, and she'd been gone
Across the field of barley,
I'd been sure to a-tryed it on
Across the field of barley.

This fifth stanza was contributed by Mr. Wilson, a student from Monroe County.

4. AUNT JEMIMA.

The following is much like Mrs. Ames's "Angelina."

1. Aunt Jemima, do go home,
Do go home, do go home,
Aunt Jemima, do go home
To get your wedding-supper.
2. Nothing there but bread and butter,
Bread and butter, bread and butter;
Nothing there but bread and butter
And a cold cup of tea.
3. Bread and butter isn't fit to eat,
Fit to eat, fit to eat;
Bread and butter isn't fit to eat,
And neither is your tea.

5. SUSAN JANE.

The first stanza of this one, from near Columbia, is like the last of Mrs. Ames's "Oh, ain't I gone?"

1. I went to see Miss Susan,
She met me at the door,
She told me that I need not come
To see her any more.
She said that she'd fell in love
With Rufus Mr. Andrew Jackson Payne;
I looked her in the face and said,
"Good-by, Susan Jane!"

Chorus.

O Susan Jane, come stop that fooling now!
O Susan Jane, come stop that fooling now!

O Susan Jane, stop your fooling
 And give your heart to me,
 And give me back my love again,
 And I will let you be;
 Oh, once I loved you dearly,
 But now I cannot love again,
 Oh, I **am** going away to leave you now,
 So good-by, Susan Jane!

2. Her mouth was like a cellar,
 Her foot was like a ham,
 Her eyes were like the owl's at night,
 Her voice was never calm.
 Her hair was long and curly,
 She looked just like a crane;
 I am going away to leave you now,
 So good-by, Susan Jane!

3. Susan she is so deceiving,
 She will not do to trust;
 I have threatened twice to leave her,
 And leave her now I must.
 I will never love another,
 To cause me any pain,
 I have trusted her, and all the girls
 Are just like Susan Jane.

6. SANDY.

This one is almost exactly like Mrs. Ames's "Sandy he belonged to the Mill."

1. Sandy he belongs to the mill,
 Sandy he belongs to the mill,
 Sandy he belongs to the mill,
 The mill belongs to Sandy.

2. "Say, Mr. Sandy, won't you loan me a mill?
 Say, Mr. Sandy, won't you loan me a mill?
 Say, Mr. Sandy, won't you loan me a mill?"
 "Yes, I will," says Sandy.

7. THE JUNIPER-TREE.

This one lacks two stanzas given by Mrs. Ames.

1. Here sits a young lady all down to sleep,
 All down to sleep, all down to sleep,
 So early in the morning.

2. It takes a young man to keep her awake,
To keep her awake, to keep her awake,
So early in the morning.
3. So put this hat on your head to keep your head warm,
To keep your head warm, to keep your head warm,
So early in the morning.

8. JOLLY MILLER.

There stands a jolly miller all alone by himself,
Day by day he is gaining in his wealth,
One hand in the hopper and the other in the sack,
The ladies step forward and the gents step back.

9. OLD QUEBEC.

Much like "We're marching round the Levee," is the following. Mr. Crookshank's grandfather, from Virginia, says they sang it there as a pawn-song, and redeemed the forfeits; but in Linn County it is merely a marching-song.

1. We are marching down to old Quebec,
Where the drums are loudly beating;
The American troops have gained the day,
And the British are retreating.
2. The war's all over, and we'll turn back
To the place where we first started.
We'll open up a ring and choose a couple in,
To heal the broken-hearted.

10. OLD BRASS WAGON.

The tune to this is the same as to Mrs. Ames's.

1. Do see the old brass wagon,
Do see the old brass wagon,
You're the one, my darling.
2. Meet halfway in the old brass wagon,
Meet halfway in the old brass wagon,
You're the one, my darling.
3. Break hand, swing in the old brass wagon,
Break hand, swing in the old brass wagon,
You're the one, my darling.
4. Lead her up and down long as you love her,
Lead her up and down long as you love her,
You're the one, my darling.
5. Neck-yoke down and double-trees draggin',
Neck-yoke down and double-trees draggin',
You're the one, my darling.

6. Run away, all, in the old brass wagon,
Run away, all, in the old brass wagon,
You're the one, my darling.
7. Front wheels off and the axle draggin',
Front wheels off and the axle draggin',
You're the one, my darling.
8. Keep a-hangin' on the old brass wagon,
Keep a-hangin' on the old brass wagon,
You're the one, my darling.
9. The side boards on the old brass wagon,
The side boards on the old brass wagon,
You're the one, my darling.

II. TI-DE-O.

Corresponding to "Pass one Window" is this from Linn County.

Pass one window, ti-de-o,
Pass two windows, ti-de-o,
Pass three windows, ti-de-o,
Jingle at a window, ti-de-o.

12. AS I WENT DOWN.

Somewhat like "Eighteen Hundred and Sixty," which Mrs. Ames says is still sung at play-parties, and which contains the line "A pretty little girl in Georgia," is this one from near Columbia.

As I went down in Georgia town,
A-sparkin' Georgia girls around, —
Georgia girls none surpasses,
Sweet as sorghum 'lasses, —
Hope to marry before I die,
By and by, by and by.

13. OLD RACCOON.

This is a fuller version than Mrs. Ames's. It was known by my grandfather, who came from Kentucky to northern Missouri.

1. As I went out by the light of the moon,
A-singing of that same old tune,
'Twas there I met with an old raccoon
Riding on a rail.

Chorus.

Riding on a rail,
Riding on a rail,
I'm not afraid of a big raccoon
Riding on a rail.

2. Says I, "Mr. Coon, oh, howdy do?"
Says he, "I'm well, and how are you?"
I'm not afraid of a bugaboo
Riding on a rail.

14. KING WILLIAM

This version is not as full as Mrs. Ames's.

1. King William was King James's son,
From the royal race he sprung,
Upon his breast he wore a star,
Which-a way the compass are.
2. Go look to the east, go look to the west,
Choose the one that you love best,
If she isn't here to take your part,
Choose another with all your heart.

The rest of these are not found in Mrs. Ames's collection, but are sung in Linn County.

15. JOLLY ROVER

The following is a marching-song.

I am a jolly rover
Just lately come on shore.
I spent my time in jubilee,
As I have done before.

Chorus.

We will march all round, all round, all round,
We will march all round, all round, all round,
Until I come to a pretty, pretty girl,
And I'll kiss her kneeling down.

16. OLD CHIMNEY-SWEEPER.

There was once an old chimney-sweeper,
He had but one daughter,
He could not keep her,
For since she has resolved to marry;
Go join your right hand,
This broom step over,
And kiss the sweet lips
Of your true lover.

17. SUSIE GIRL.

Known to three students in a rhetoric class here.

Out at the window, Susie, Susie,
Out at the window, Susie girl!
Run a little faster, Susie,
Run a little faster, Susie girl!
Catch him and kiss him, Susie, Susie,
Catch him and kiss him, Susie girl!

18. LITTLE FIGHT IN MEXICO.

Suggestive of "Old Quebec" is this next one, known to three students in a rhetoric class.

1. Had a little fight in Mexico;
If it wasn't for the girls, the boys wouldn't go.

Chorus.

Sing tra-la-la,
Sing tra-la-la-lay.

2. Oh the girls and boys when they do meet,
They turn right around and swing so sweet.
3. They come to the scene where the blood was shed;
The girls turn back and the boys go ahead.

19. LITTLE BROWN JUG.

Known to nine students in a rhetoric class.

1. Sent my brown jug down in town,
Sent my brown jug down in town,
Sent my brown jug down in town
So early in the morning.
2. It came back with a waltz around,
It came back with a waltz around,
It came back with a waltz around
So early in the morning.
3. They keep good whiskey down in town,
They keep good whiskey down in town,
They keep good whiskey down in town
So early in the morning.
4. If you don't watch out, it will get you down,
If you don't watch out, it will get you down,
If you don't watch out, it will get you down
So early in the morning.
5. Ain't she sweet, my honey-o,
Ain't she sweet, my honey-o,
Ain't she sweet, my honey-o
So early in the morning?
6. Alcohol will get you down,
Alcohol will get you down,
Alcohol will get you down
So early in the morning.
7. Whiskey will turn you round and round,
Whiskey will turn you round and round,
Whiskey will turn you round and round
So early in the morning.

Another student knows this stanza:—

Take out the cork and throw it down,
Take out the cork and throw it down,
Take out the cork and throw it down
So early in the morning.

20. LOW-LY-LOW.

Known to one student.

"Oh, don't you see my pretty little miss?
And don't you think she's lovely?"
"Yes, I do, and if you will walk right fast,
She'll make you a match forever."
A low-ly-low; a low-ly-low.

21. CRINNY MY CRANKY.

Known to one student.

Crinny my cranky is my song,
I'll sing and dance it all along,
From the elbow to the wrist,
Now's the time to take a twist.
Hurrah, hurrah, for Crinny my Cranky!

22. NEEDLE'S EYE.

Known to sixteen students.

The needle's eye he doth supply
The thread that runs so truly;
Many a beau have I let go,
But now I've caught my July.
They bow so neat, they kiss so sweet,
If you intend before me to see this couple meet.

23. GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME.

Known to eleven students.

First gent out to the lady on the right,
Swing her by the right hand, swing your partner by the right,
And promenade the girl behind you.
Oh that girl, that pretty little girl!
The girl I left behind me.
Every time I think of her,
The tears they almost blind me;
I think of the grace, oh the charming grace,
Of the girl I left behind me.

24. ROXY ANN.

Known to two students.

Roxy Ann was an old fool girl,
 She fooled me all the while.
 She fooled me once, she fooled me twice,
 She fooled me all the while.
 You've been a long time fooling, fooling,
 You've been a long time fooling me.
 She fooled me in the parlor, she fooled me in the hall,
 She fooled me in the kitchen, and that's the worst of all.

These additional stanzas to Mrs. Ames's version and to the Linn County version of this song have been danced to by Edna McNealey of Putnam and Sullivan County, and by most of the other students of the class.

25. THE OLD BRASS WAGON.

1. | : Meet halfway in the old brass wagon, : | (*three times*)
 You're the one, my darling.
2. | : Left hand swing in the old brass wagon, : | (*three times*)
 You're the one, my darling.
3. | : Right hand swing in the old brass wagon, : | (*three times*)
 You're the one, my darling.
4. | : Both hands swing in the old brass wagon, : | (*three times*)
 You're the one, my darling.
5. | : Do-si-do in the old brass wagon, : | (*three times*)
 You're the one, my darling.
6. | : Lead her up and down as long as you like her, : | (*three times*)
 You're the one, my darling.
7. | : Wheel them and whirl them in the old brass wagon, : | (*three times*)
 You're the one, my darling.
8. | : Both wheels off and the neck-yoke draggin', : | (*three times*)
 You're the one, my darling.
9. | : Front wheels and the axle draggin', : | (*three times*)
 You're the one, my darling.
10. | : Change and swing in the old brass wagon, : | (*three times*)
 You're the one, my darling.

There seems to be no end to the number of stanzas sung. They say, "We just make up as many others as we want to."

In addition to the Linn County songs given above, are all the

following, known, danced to recently, and written down, by members of a rhetoric class.

26. GENTS TO CENTRE.

Contributed by S. E. Wilson of Monroe County.

1. All gents to centre with right hand cross,
Ha! da di diddle a dum,
Form a star with left hand back,
Take your partner as you go round.

Chorus.

Gents swing out, and ladies swing in,
Hold your "holts" and circle again,
Break the swing and promenade,
Promenade with a waltzing swing.

2. All gents to the centre with right hand cross,
Ha da diddle do dum,
Form a star with left hand back,
Skip your partner and take the next.
3. All gents to the centre and form in a ring,
And when you have formed, go balance and swing,
And when you have swung, remember your call,
Swing the next lady and run away all.
4. Up and down the railroad-track,
Half a swing around,
Back to the centre with the same old swing,
And swing four hands round, and swing four hands round.

27. COME, MY LOVE.

Contributed by Robert Berger of Montgomery County, and known to two in the rhetoric class.

1. | : Come, my love, and go with me, : | (*three times*)
And we'll be married on Friday O.
2. | : I am too young, I am not fit, : | (*three times*)
I cannot leave my mamma yet.
3. | : Oh, yes, you are, you are just right, : | (*three times*)
You'll be sixteen to-morrow night.
4. | : If that be so, then I will go, : | (*three times*)
And we'll be married on Friday O.
5. | : Now you're married, you must be good, : | (*three times*)
Go and chop your wife some wood.
6. | : Chop it fine and carry it in, : | (*three times*)
And she will kiss you once again.

Other stanzas are composed spontaneously, all sorts of tasks being assigned.

28. BUFFALO GIRLS.

Four of the rhetoric class know this, contributed by Mary Miller of Linn County.

1. Buffalo girls all around the outside,
All around the outside, all around the outside,
And balance to your partners.

Chorus.

Partners swing and promenade a ring,
Promenade a ring, promenade a ring,
And balance on the corner.

2. Buffalo boys all around the outside,
All around the outside, all around the outside,
And balance to your partners.

29. CHASE THE SQUIRREL.

Contributed by Miss Bridges of Schuyler County, and known to eight in the rhetoric class.

Chase the squirrel with the lady in the lead,
Gent fall through and take the lead,
Lady follow up and take the lead,
And circle four hands round.

30. LADY ON THE GREEN GRASS.

Contributed by Grace Galbreath of Davis County.

Lady on the green grass,
Lady on the hay,
Take hold of her pretty hand,
And lead her by the hand.

31. RILEY BROWN.

This, by Jessie Sharer of Adair County, is known by two rhetoric students.

Riley, Riley, good old Riley Brown,
All the girls in this town
Are stuck on Riley Brown.

Chorus.

| : Move along a zigzag, : | (*three times*)
Good old Riley Brown.

32. THREE OLD BUMS.

Contributed by Edna McNealey of Putnam and Sullivan County,
and known to two rhetoric students.

1. | : Three old "bums" went down to town, : | (*three times*)
So early in the morning.

Chorus.

- | : Swing them all around as you bring them in : | (*three times*)
So early in the morning.

2. | : Three pretty maids went skating free : | (*three times*)
So early in the morning.

33. LITTLE BROWN JUG.

Known to six students in a rhetoric class, and contributed by Miss
Grace Bridges of Schuyler County.

1. My wife and I lived all alone
In a little log hut we called our own.
She loved gin and I loved rum,
I'll tell you what, we had some fun.

Chorus.

Ha! ha! ha! you and me,
Little brown jug, don't I love thee?

2. 'Twas you who made my friends and foes,¹
'Twas you who made me wear old clothes.
So here you are so near my nose;
Tip her up, and down she goes.
3. If I had a cow that give such milk,
I'd dress her in the finest silk,
And feed her on the finest hay,
And milk her forty times a day.
4. As I went down the railroad-track
I took my brown jug on my back,
I stubbed my toe and I went down,
And broke my brown jug on the ground.

34. THE SAILOR-BOYS.

Contributed by Edward Howell of Adair County.

1. Here stands three boys,
Three jolly sailor-boys
Just come on shore.
And he that delights
In a pretty little wife,
Just lead her on the floor.

¹ Known by children in Lynn, Mass., thus:

2. 'Twas you who made my friends my foes, etc.
3. If I had a cow that didn't give milk, etc.

Chorus.

Oh, we'll take another row,
 Oh, we'll take another row.
 And he that delights
 In a pretty little wife,
 Just lead her on the floor.

2. Here stands three girls,
 Three jolly sailor-girls
 Just come on shore,
 And he that delights
 In a pretty little wife,
 Just lead her on the floor.

35. ROUND THAT LADY.

Known to six rhetoric students.

1. Round that lady in London,
 Round that gent in London,
 First couple out to London,
 So I heard them say.
2. Round that lady in London,
 Round that gent in London,
 Couple up two to London,
 So I heard them say.
3. Round that lady in London,
 Round that gent in London,
 Couple up three in London,
 So I heard them say.
 [*So on up to stanza 8.*]

36. UP AND DOWN.

Contributed by C. N. Dye of Macon County is this composite one.

1. Up and down the railroad-track
 And halfway swing around,
 Back to the centre and two couples swing,
 With four hands cast around.

Chorus.

Do-si-do, my darling,
 Miss, fare you well, I'm gone,
 Do-si-do, my darling,
 Miss, with the white slippers on.

2. The higher up a cherry-tree
 The riper grows the cherries;
 The sooner a young man courts the girls,
 The younger he will marry.

3. Used to ride an old gray horse,
And now I ride a roan;
You may hug and kiss your own sweetheart,
But you had better leave mine alone.
4. I wish I had a needle and thread
As fine as I could sew;
I would sew my girl to my coat-tail,
And down that river I would go.
5. I used to drive a four-horse team,
And hooked old nag behind;
Since I got a new sweetheart,
You are no girl of mine.

37. LONDON BRIDGE IS FALLING DOWN.

Known to fifteen rhetoric students, and contributed by Edward Howell of Adair County.

1. London bridge is falling down,
Falling down, falling down,
London bridge is falling down,
My fair lady.¹
2. Build it up with iron bands,
Iron bands, iron bands,
Build it up with iron bands,
My fair lady.²

38. UP AND DOWN THE CENTRE.

Known to four rhetoric students, and contributed by Lelah Clapper of Putnam County.

1. Up and down the centre we go,
Up and down the centre we go,
Up and down the centre we go,
This cold and stormy morning.
2. Catch her and kiss her if you can,
Catch her and kiss her if you can,
Catch her and kiss her if you can,
This cold and stormy morning.

Most of these students report that there is a marked decline the past five years in the prevalence of the play-party in their own county. Some say that in their own district, play-parties are scarcely ever given, though still popular five or ten miles away. In a few districts they are attended still by the better class; in others, by the lower class. The indications are, that in a few years the play-party in northern Missouri will be a thing of the past.

KIRKSVILLE, MO.

¹ Or, So merrily.

² Or, Build it up with limestone, etc.; or, Get some bricks and build it up.